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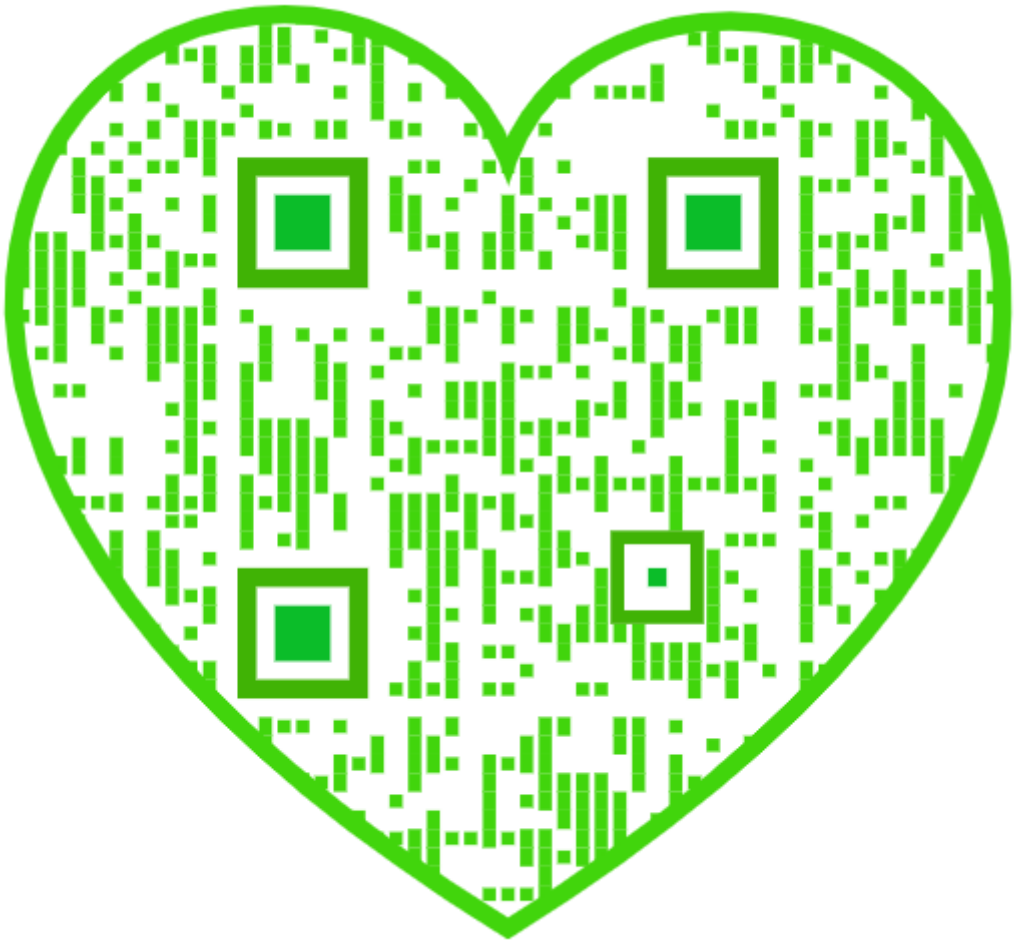
THE MESSENGERS OF PEACE



THE MESSENGERS OF PEACE

A Christmas Allegory

BY

WILLIAM STANLEY PARKER

GIVEN AT
THE TAVERN CLUB
AT ITS CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL
DECEMBER 23
1915

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THE MESSENGERS OF PEACE

THE CHARACTERS

THE TWO MESSENGERS	JOHN STURGIS CODMAN WILLIAM STANLEY PARKER
JUSTICE	GEORGE PIERCE BAKER
HUMILITY	RICHARD CLIPSTON STURGIS
SENSE OF HUMOR	JOHN BAPST BLAKE
SELFISHNESS	LANGDON WARNER
INTEMPERANCE	LORIN FULLER DELAND
DECEIT	HENRY COPLEY GREENE
TRUTH	BLISS PERRY
SACRIFICE	CHARLES HOWARD WALKER
RESTRAINT	JASPER WHITING
THE TWO PAGES	WILLIAM JAMES GERALD BLAKE
A VOICE	FREDERICK ELDREDGE LOWELL

Before Dinner

THE ENTRANCE OF THE MESSENGERS

The yule log has been lighted on the hearth, and as the yule song comes to an end there is a knock at the front door.

SECRETARY. Somebody see who it is and tell him he must go around to the side door.

A MEMBER (*opening the door and seeing two strangers, with whom he has a few words*). It's not a member, but two strangers, who, I think, want to speak to you.

SECRETARY. The rule says only that *members* must come in by the side door after seven o'clock, and that no *guests* are allowed. If these are strangers, let them come in; they should always be welcome.

Enter the TWO MESSENGERS.

SECRETARY. Welcome. What can we do for you?

PEACE MESSENGER. 'Twould seem we have not been misled, and that this is indeed the Tavern Club.

SECRETARY. It certainly is. We are just starting our Christmas revels. May we know the reason for your appearance, and who indeed you are?

WAR MESSENGER. We may not easily convince you about ourselves; nevertheless, we beg you to believe that what we say is truth, however strange it sound to ears of the Planet Earth. We are two messengers from Mars.

SECRETARY. Do they teach English in the schools on Mars?

WAR MESSENGER. We train perception in our schools, not bloodless facts. The true tuition nourishes intuition, imagination. We learn the fundamental principles of language, art, and science. To us there is no foreign tongue. Each of your earthly languages, to you so different from the others, is but a dialect of the higher speech, easily mastered once the basic code is understood. To see two human beings mute for lack of knowledge of each other's tongue is strange indeed to us.

PEACE MESSENGER. Comrade, let us not repay the courteous welcome of our hosts with preachings. I do suspect they are more interested in our presence here just now than in the higher art of education. Pray explain.

SECRETARY. Please do.

WAR MESSENGER. A year ago we landed on your planet hereabouts, and, separating, each of us has traversed your globe alone, seeking what he was sent to seek. Our society, though it has eliminated many of the trials you must still endure, is not yet free of strifes and struggles, and in an effort to complete our cure we have been sent to the Planet Earth to gain, perchance, the key to the solution of eternal peace. Wisdom is often easier gained from failure than success, and so, in this matter, with your pardon, we have been sent to study your signal failures.

My comrade's duty was to discern the two most potent forces in your lives making for peace. My duty it was, with like investigation, to find two agencies that most inclined to war.

SECRETARY. Why did you seek out this Club on such a quest, and how does it happen you are together?

PEACE MESSENGER. Our visit on your planet was for one year, at the end of which we were to meet again, and so return to Mars. The year is done to-night, and we have met. But each of us has heard, from time to time, high praises of your brotherhood, and the quality of the friendships you enjoy. It so impressed us both that, ere we return, which we must do to-night, we fain would

taste of it ourselves. Who knows! Perchance the guarded flame of friendship such as yours may be the torch with which to kindle the greater fire of universal love.

So, if you will, we would join you while we may, for soon to-night we must return to Mars, there to report our findings before the supreme Judge, who on this night each year sits to dispense his justice and to consider such affairs of state as may be opportune.

SECRETARY. Indeed, you are welcome. Stay, by all means. I know I give the welcome of the Club. Sit by our President at the feast. With him you well may feel at ease. Both war and peace he has served; in both gained victories. With the stars, too, he is linked, our Mark having dubbed him the Ursa's Major; veritably on Earth the Great Dipper—into his pocket for the good of others.

Now let us dine, but first the Club song.

"Meum est" *is sung, and the company then goes up to dinner.*

After Dinner

THE MESSENGERS' FAREWELL

The PRESIDENT *and the* TWO MESSENGERS *precede the company upstairs, where they are joined by the* SECRETARY. *The green drop-curtain is down. The tapestry curtains in front of it are drawn partly together. Two lights, high up at the back of the hall, are focussed on the drop-curtain with a strong light, yet leave the hall as a whole but dimly lit.*

When all are seated, the SECRETARY *raps for order and speaks.*

SECRETARY. Members of the Tavern Club: We have had with us at our Christmas feast two strangers, who are strange only in the degree to which they share with us the spirit of this Club. They must now leave us on their homeward journey, but before they leave they would speak you their farewell.

The TWO MESSENGERS *step onto the stage, between the partly drawn tapestry curtains.*

PEACE MESSENGER. Friends, for thus we are,
With common instincts and perceptions,
That bind men together forever
Though they meet but once,
We are glad to have shared your Christmas feast
And to have tarried with you for awhile.
Cherish your rare associations.
Drink deep of the spirit of the guarded flame,
The sacred leaven in the human lump.
A year in search of that which works for peace,
I come at last to this fair house of yours
And find naught else. True, you are humans all,
And in my travels through your world I've met all kinds,
And know your virtues, and your failings too.
So I suspect within your Tavern breasts
A modicum of human weakness lies.
Some power for anger, but in good control.
A will to hate. Pray! do not misconstrue.
Hate is a poison true,
But poison fed to vipers is a boon,
And hate of the false and ugly things of life

That surges in your blood no poison is,
But rather manna for the dove of peace.
So seeming faults when properly applied
Prove to be virtues; moths eat moths,
And the pest that overcomes a pestilence
Becomes a blessing in its turn until,
Getting out of leash itself, it needs must meet
Its doom by a greater pest in turn.
Health is not measured by a lack of germs;
Rather by millions in a useful balance.
So too with Peace; no partial vacuum there,
But all the sacred passions divinely mixed.
True symbol is the color of the dove
That stands for peace, pure white,
A blend of all the colors known to man
In just proportions.
Leave out the good blood red
And on the wings a tinge of drab will come,
Marring the whole,
Leaving it incomplete and negative,
Color fit for a pigeon, impotent,
A symbol for the pacifist, not peace.

Here with you we find the mixture good;
Youth and age on equal footing met,
Poetry and music blending mind and soul
In loveliest harmonies,
Painting and sculpture 'neath this very roof
Show skill in willing service of affection.
Wisdom and charity, wisely hand in hand,
Go forth from here to serve mankind in need;
And all these elements here I seem to see

Like shuttles, wound with the golden thread of friendship,
Weaving a rich-hued tapestry of life;
A woof of fellowship on a warp of service.
I take this picture back with me to Mars,
And with a grateful heart I say farewell.

WAR MESSENGER. Even we Martians, like your doctors, give advice
To others that we ourselves do not observe.
My comrade, who did lately chide me in your presence for preaching,
Has in good sooth forgotten his advice.
I will take warning and be brief,
As our quick departure too demands.
Your Secretary spoke the truth, indeed,
In saying that we share the spirit of your Club.
Here in your world, I much regret to find,
Mars is the symbol of the warlike spirit.
Still, with us on Mars, worldliness stands for strife;
So we are quits for that.
With us true friendship is much increased
Beyond what we have seen exists on Earth.
There we have chained the commercial spirit
To the post of servant.
No more it rules with us as it does here.
Our lives are ordered for our happiness,
And ugliness and inharmonious noise are crimes.
So here we find ourselves as it were at home,
And parting, wish to leave behind with you
Some witness of our love and gratitude.
Friendship sharpens perceptions,

And it is with us so far developed
That spirits in true accord transmit to each other
A higher power of vision,
So that each, in his mind's eye as it were,
Never quite loses sight of the other,
However far apart the two may be.
This gift we leave you,
And if for a moment after we depart
You all will concentrate your friendliest thoughts upon us,
Banish all else and think of us alone,
The power to follow us on our homeward flight will come,
And each mind's eye will then observe
All that we do, and learn of our report,
Which we must shortly make, as we have told.
Give us your hearts, then, and you'll find
Our spirit with you after we depart.

Farewell, good World, our year has taught us much.
Perchance the seed that in us has been sown
May some day flutter back to earth enriched,
And growing, ripen, so the world may reap
A harvest of great gladness and content.

The light goes out. The TWO MESSENGERS *step behind the tapestry curtain and go behind the scenes ready for their later entrance. The tapestry curtains are pulled back and the drop-curtain raised on a dark stage. The lights are then gradually brought on full.*

The Allegory

THE COURT OF JUSTICE

The stage is enclosed with a semi-circular wall, with a central opening at the back, beyond which a further curtain terminates the view and permits entrance from either side.

To the left of the opening is seen JUSTICE *on the throne, with* HUMILITY *on his right and* SENSE OF HUMOR *on his left. To its right is seen the jury of human qualities with* SELFISHNESS *nearest the entrance, and then, in order,* INTEMPERANCE, DECEIT, TRUTH, SACRIFICE, *and* RESTRAINT. *Standing in the entrance at the back are two* PAGES. *When the lights are full on,* JUSTICE *speaks.*

USTICE. The labors of our court approach their end.
The yearly crop of crimes our people send
To us for threshing, marvellously small,
Speaks of the day when there'll be none at all.
For many years we've strangers been to lust.
Spite's like a cruel dagger thick with rust
Through lack of use, and brutal violence
Long has been tamed.

SENSE OF HUMOR. Like a bull with common sense.

JUSTICE. Still have we faults, less manifest than these,
Insidious, subtle, like a fell disease,
That cripples life. Still lurking Deceit,
Like ancient Janus, two-faced, waits to greet
Each novice passing the gates of enterprise;
Giving false promise, paving his path with lies.
And, as of old the Janus' temple door,
Ever wide open during time of war,

When shut was a sign of universal peace,
So now 'twill prove a symbol of release
From many of the ills the times afford,
When sly Deceit shall stray no more abroad.

DECEIT. I'm much maligned beyond my just deserts.
'Tis self-defence against the grievous hurts
That others would inflict that makes me use
My thrust and parry that you so abuse.

SENSE OF HUMOR. The acme of deceit is here perceived,
When by his own deceit he is deceived.
Who lies to live soon lives to lie, forsooth,
Till e'en to himself he cannot speak the truth.

JUSTICE. 'Tis not Deceit alone that doth disturb.
Hectic Intemperance still requires a curb.
Intemperate thought and action both conspire
To spoil the effect both thought and act desire.
With faculties, like harp-strings, wisely taught,
Our lives with harmonious actions would be fraught;
But overstressed they soon get out of key,
And discords come instead of harmony.
The keyboard of our lives, on which we play
The tune by which we're gauged on Judgment Day,
Has for its deep-toned bass the worthier things,
While pleasure, care free, in the treble sings.
Together, nicely blended, both should be.
The worthier bass alone lacks melody.
In tripping treble, with no firm support
On deeper tones, but trivial tunes are wrought.

SENSE OF HUMOR. Music for those who seek a frivolous goal.
The syncopated rag-time of the soul.

JUSTICE. More than all other ills that we endure,
Selfishness doth elude attempted cure.
Now, with Deceit it makes unholy pact,
And lurks, insidious, 'neath a generous act.
Now, brazen-faced, it strides its chosen way,
Crushing 'neath callous feet its luckless prey.

SELFISHNESS. The truth in what you say I fail to see.
'Tis envy sneers at my ability,
And calls it greed.

SACRIFICE. You are indeed quite blind
To what is most worth while. Like all your kind,
With eyes, obedient to the self-centred brain,
Fastened unblinking on some unworthy gain,
With tragic blindness, that can never see
In sacrifice the opportunity
To make life richer, fellowship more blest,
You hurt the worst those that you love the best.

A gong is struck thrice outside.

JUSTICE. A year ago two Messengers we sent
To the Planet Earth, with serious intent
From its unhappy history to evolve
A key to the riddle we ourselves would solve,
Eternal Peace. Now before our court
The Messengers are ready to report.
The gong that marked their advent has been heard.
Bid them appear. Listen to what occurred
Upon their travels yonder on the Earth,
And may we find their experience of worth.

The PAGES *have stepped out. They now return taking their places against the back curtain. The* MESSENGERS *enter and make obeisance, and then take their positions at the entrance. As they speak they each step slightly for-*

ward, and afterward take their positions, standing, beside HUMILITY *and* SENSE OF HUMOR.

JUSTICE. Good Messengers, we wait upon your words,
Expectant of the wisdom you have gained
Upon your travels. Tell us what you found
Upon the Planet Earth, and what deduced
From your experience there, that offers hope
That some day we may gain a lasting peace.

WAR MESSENGER. Our journey has been made as it was ordered.
Throughout the year we travelled far and wide
On separate paths, seeking our separate goals,
Meeting again only upon the time
Of our return. My duty was to seek,
From out the tangle of the World's events,
Two factors that most served to foster war.
Many I found that lent their vicious aid
To that result, and oh the tragedies!
Millions enslaved to serve the greed of one.
Calamity from pettiest actions wrought.
A single murderous act of violence,
Flung on the peaceful surface of the world,
Like a pebble snapped to the surface of a pool,
Starts ripples of hate that widen beyond control,
Until the whole earth rocks with frightfulness,
And calm reflection of higher things must cease,
Until the paroxysm doth subside
From sheer exhaustion. Underlying all
The pettiness of strife I seemed to see
Two causes, noble in themselves, and yet
More than all others fostering cruel hate
That feeds on war. First, Patriotism,

Whose varied banners, since the world began,
Have floated o'er the ranks of armèd men
In every battle. Patriots never yet
Have stopped to question if their cause be just;
Or if they stopped and found their cause most vile,
Still would they fight, their country to maintain
Against the attacks of others. Under the spell
Of patriotic plea a leader keen
Can cause his people, hypnotized, to fight
His selfish battles, that to them bring naught
But suffering and bondage still more deep.
The other, Religion, under whose fair name
The worst excesses known to man have found
Justification. Great crusades of conquest
Plough their relentless, egotistic way,
In the name of a sacred God, to trample down
The sacred Gods of others in the dust.
O dreadful paradox! that a noble faith,
Founded on brotherly love and charity,
Can foster such distortion of the mind
That charity is put in leash, and love
Is turned to bitterest hate against a foe
Whose only guilt, a faith no less sincere.

The elements have power for good or ill.
Whoe'er invokes them needs a controlling will.
The fires of the human soul, if uncontrolled,
Can devastate with bitterness untold.
So men, when grievous happenings befall,
On Patriotism and Religion call,
Their selfish instincts to endow with life,
And fill the world with bitterness and strife.

PEACE MESSENGER. Strangely alike our judgments seem to be,
Freighted perchance with deep significance.
Seeking the greater elements of peace,
The same two motives seemed to dominate
The life of man, Religion and Patriotism,—
Devotion to God and to his fellow-men.
While on the surface motives seem to take
The colors of unworthy enterprise,
Deeper within their truer color lies.
The restless surface of the sea of life
Is whipped by the storms of hate and violence;
But deep beneath, the currents of faith and love
Sweep steadfast on in their appointed course.
Such instruments as these man needs must learn
To use with wisdom, and it is not strange
If in the learning he should make mistakes,—
Exceptions that but serve to prove the rule.
How Patriotism ever spreads its net,
Encircling larger and yet larger groups,
Since those first days when neolithic man
Allegiance owed to naught but his own hearth.
Who dare deny the day when it shall sweep
All artificial barriers away
And claim all men in one great brotherhood?
And when that day shall come Religion too
Shall find its full expression in men's lives;
And differences of faith, that in the past
Have caused world-racking strife and suffering,
Shall melt away into insignificance
Beside the common truths that underlie.

JUSTICE. You've heard what our good Messengers report.
Hasty Intemperance first shall make retort.

INTEMPERANCE. The slow of mind ever are wont to sneer
And call intemperate that which leaps beyond
Their meagre vision. I am the essence of genius.
Without me none can be supremely great.
I make the most of things; develop all
The possibilities that lie within
Man's senses. We have a pair of eyes with which
To see the most we can. 'Twas never meant
For us to go through life with eyes half-shut,
Denying the existence of all superlatives,
Saying, thus far, no farther; taste no more
Of this; of that thou shalt not further touch.
By what assumed authority dost thou
Settle the limits of man's experience?
No progress yet was made without my aid.
The patriot, lacking my fervor, ne'er would leap
The battlements of oppression, there to see
The dawn of greater freedom as he falls.
The martyred priest, whose great self-sacrifice
Gives to the world a priceless heritage
Of inspiration, had not died so great,
Or lived so greatly, were it not for me.
So in your rightful seeking after peace
Do not forget my spirit must not cease.
No peace a lasting peace will ever be
That does not find itself at peace with me.

SENSE OF HUMOR. Ha, ha! good champion of the thirsty throat,

Securely you can count upon my vote.
You are indeed the seasoning of our lives,—
The human salt and pepper, onions, chives,
All that combine to make life's salad rich
And make life's palate with satisfaction twitch.
But if you're wise you'll not deny my aid.
Before your salad is completely made,
A dash of humor wiped around the bowl,
Like garlic, gives a flavor to the whole.

JUSTICE. Intemperance has his virtues frankly told.
Now let Restraint his argument unfold.

RESTRAINT. I would not under-rate the fire with which
Intemperance in his nobler moments burns.
The power he generates needs a restraining curb
In application. Were it not for me
His splendid energy would waste itself
In useless noise, like the escaping steam
That, bursting the bonds that give to it its power,
Misses the piston it was meant to drive,
And spends itself in wild futility.
I am the spirit of true economy;
The governor on the engine of the world.
And not alone in great emergencies
My virtue lies. The small events of life,
From day to day, need my attention more,
That from them seeds of excess may not be sown
From which a crop of sorrow shall be reaped.
The world swings forward on its reckless course,
Neglecting all precautions as it goes,
Passing with unobservant eye the signs
That in profusion point its certain end,
Till of a sudden in its frantic path

A deep abyss of conflict cuts across.
Then with a sinking heart it doth implore
The brakes of self-restraint to check its speed
And save it from disaster. But too late!
On a nice balance in our daily trend
The whole world's equilibrium doth depend.
When over little things each gains control,
And not till then, will peace come to the whole.

JUSTICE. Selfishness is no stranger to conceit.
No doubt he is sure he knows the true receipt
For peace. So let us lend a patient ear
While Selfishness as Wisdom doth appear.

SELFISHNESS. I am amused at all your sophistries
Of altruism. Every forward step
In the history of the world has come about
By the clash of selfish interests,—nature's flints,
From which the spark of progress best is struck.
The noble patriot fights for selfish gain.
It is not freedom for freedom's sake he wants,
So much as freedom from some oppressive tax,
Or greater commercial opportunities
That promise wealth and great prosperity.
The ruler who can hold his tribes in leash,
So that they needs must fight as he dictates,
Has the power, and, having power, the right,
To take what he can get, until the time
When some born leader fosters a revolt
Among his subjects. Then, the tables turned,
They take for themselves what he for himself would take.
Strip from each patriot that you glorify
The glittering raiment of hypocrisy,

And underneath but common flesh you'll find,
Ruled by the selfish instincts of mankind.
'Tis better so; the cards all on the table,
And let each man secure what he is able.

JUSTICE. Such frankness is not hard to understand.
Now let Deceit, his partner, show his hand.

SENSE OF HUMOR. He would not be Deceit if he did that.
Yet he will have his story down quite pat.
As the juggler palms his coin beneath your eye,
He'll palm the truth and substitute a lie.

DECEIT. There's little use for me to speak the truth;
Since you have given me so bad a name,
You'd not believe it if 'twere told by me.
Selfishness speaks the truth. His spirit rules,
And rightly so, the progress of the world.
'Tis the only honest policy there is.
With that admitted, everything is fair.
My skill his natural ally is. No rules
You need to play the game; everything goes.
The complex code of life you would adopt
Is needless. All hypocrisy is dropped.
Forget the subtle schemes that you have planned
And play a game the world can understand.

JUSTICE. How blind indeed philosophers have been
To overlook the virtues of this pair.
More notable perhaps their strength to resist
The greater logic we have used in vain.
Let Truth once more come forward to the attack
And put Deceit again upon the rack.

TRUTH. 'Tis difficult to put him on the rack
Who hath so many aliases in his sack.

In every walk of life he plays his game,
Always disguised by some more worthy name;
But call it diplomacy or what you will,
The odor of deceit hangs round it still.
The cards all on the table? That is true;
But stacked by the dealer, if the dealer's you,
Who from long practice have acquired the knack
Of dealing from the bottom of the pack.
You argue we should make deceit the rule.
A disingenuous plea to trap a fool.
If it so became at once you'd lose the place
Your monopoly now gives you in the race.
There is one fortress that defends your throne
That first must be completely overthrown,—
Deceit of self, that salient point of thrust,
Which lost, your defence would crumble into dust.
How oft, against a weak intelligence,
The specious pleas of quick expedience
Lead us to take some by-way in our haste
That promises a short cut to our taste,
But proves a devious way whene'er it's tried,
Through which Deceit alone can be our guide.
Short-sighted eyes, that see not stretching there
The great highway of truth, surpassing fair,
That broad and smooth leads straight to every goal,
And gives true satisfaction to the soul.
When each shall for himself that pathway take,
The world will then to lasting peace awake.

JUSTICE. The broad highway of truth is never trod
Without self-sacrifice, so now, I pray,
That Truth has shared his confidence with us,
Let his companion add his counsel too.

SACRIFICE. 'Tis the irony of fate that selfishness,
Which more than aught else impels a man to strive,
Blinds him to what is most worth striving for.
He labors unceasing whims to satisfy;
For the greater satisfactions he cannot see,
With what rare zeal he'd strive, if he but saw.
Although he shuns material charity
Of gifts to those less favored by the world,
More vital far the moral charity
That in his selfish spirit finds no place.
With what supreme intolerance he views
Opinions that are at variance with his own!
Arrogant of his own integrity,
The motives of others freely he impugns,
And, all unconscious, judges their honest acts
By the low standards he for himself hath set.
How dulled his imagination hath become
Of the point of view of others. Strange indeed
The inconsistencies of selfishness.
A man can spend his life in most sincere
And willing service of his fellow-men,
Keen to observe and ease their suffering
With big, far-sighted generosity,
And yet by acts of petty selfishness
Can make the lives of those he cares for most
A dreary burden. 'Tis indeed most meet
That charity should begin at home, with those
With whom we share each day's experience.
The veriest tyrant hath capacity
For some great climax of self-sacrifice.
Of greater moment to a troubled world
The humbler but more constant sacrifice

That finds expression in each littlest act.
And more than aught else we all should strive to gain
A deeper, truer charity of mind,
That gives that benefit of doubt to each
That we would have others give, alike, to us.

JUSTICE (*turning to* SENSE OF HUMOR). Good Friend, you always stand us in good stead
In time of need. You've heard what has been said.
Have you the wit to see some common link
In these two chains of argument? Some kink
There is in each, perchance, that, straightened out,
Would put their seeming differences to rout.

SENSE OF HUMOR. Mistake me not for wit. He spokesman is.
I am the silent partner in the biz.
He pays his way through life with notes of mirth.
'Tis my endorsement gives his notes their worth.
I'm but a background for the passing show,
'Gainst which its outlines you may truly know.
The lens that serves to bring a focus nice
To the astigmatic eyes of prejudice.
These selfish pals my virtues will not see.
We still are strangers and shall ever be.
Self-sacrifice needs my guiding hand.
Without me he oft fails to understand
His proper limits; and when he turns his back
Upon Restraint as well, and takes the tack
Intemperance points, he takes an aspect queer,
And as a New England conscience doth appear.
Without my counsel our good friend Restraint
Becomes intemperate as the ascetic saint,

And in his zeal forgets his common sense,
And mistakes for temperance, total abstinence.
Alone among them all Truth stands apart
And needs me not. The others need my art
That they may all more clearly recognize
The truth beneath its manifold disguise.

JUSTICE. True to his nature, good Humility
Sits humbly by, waiting with patience rare
Such opportunity as may arrive
For him to speak. The time has come, good Friend,
When we would have your counsel. Tell us, pray,
What you believe to be the surest road
Toward that peace to which we all aspire.

HUMILITY. You do not find my silence a surprise.
'Tis seldom that one hears my voice with those
That swell the conversation of our time.
The strident tones of noisy arrogance
Drown out the calmer voices in the throng.
As the wild animal, filled with unreasoning fear,
Bellows to fright the noise that frightens him,
So, with his own noise, arrogance tries to kill
The still small voice within that whispers doubt.
The modern child? Alas! he knows me not.
Youth over-fed with opportunity
Makes a dyspeptic, egotistic age,
In which humility is an unwelcome guest.
More oft the scientist, with knowledge deep
Of many secrets of the universe,
Is humbled by the secrets yet unsolved,
And gains a power from that humility
That leads him on to deeper knowledge still.

Assurance based on knowledge stimulates
To further knowledge. Arrogant conceit,
With naught but worldly wisdom as its cause,
Denies the greater wisdom of the world.
How oft is that which we hold certain shown
To be untrue! How seldom do we find
Ourselves less sure through such experience!
Knowledge is power; the greatest power of all
A knowledge of what we have not yet attained.
Humility oft with weakness is confused.
It was not so with Christ. Humility
Gives us a saner poise in all our acts,
A surer balance, with our feet well braced
Against the rocks of the eternal truths.
The braggart egotist, vain of his small powers,
Buries the truth in the sands of compromise,
And stands awhile complacently at ease,
Till in some crisis he is caught and finds
The shifting sands give him no foot secure
To brace himself against the push of fate.
Let us brush from our eyes all vain conceit
And see ourselves in just comparison
With the great immensities of time and truth.
Then may we gain for ourselves some modest share
Of Christ's humility, and help to bring
A Christian peace into a troubled world.

JUSTICE. You all have spoken, and the truth appears
Self-evident. A painter wastes his time
Attempting some great fresco that involves
A complex group of figures till he's learned
To draw with certainty a single form.
Until we all have gained a right control

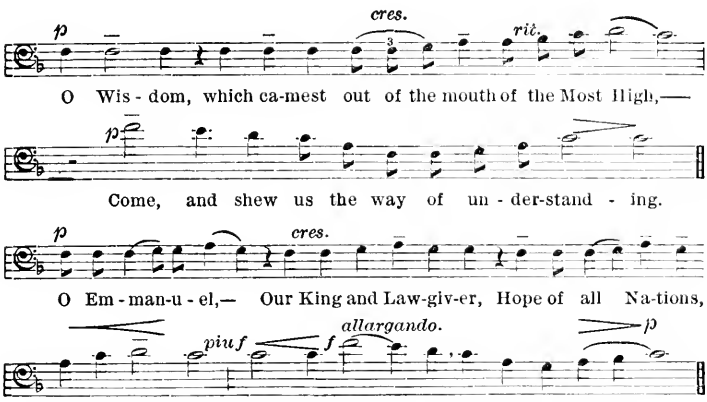
Of ourselves, how can we hope to regulate
The peaceful composition of the world?
With cities ruled by deceit and selfishness,
And racked with evil passions uncontrolled,
Nations have little hope to win relief
From blighting wars that serve a nation's greed.

Let each man purge his own soul of unworthiness;
Put away selfish greed and foul deceit;
Rule his own thoughts with charity of mind;
And in the service of his fellow-men
Find the supreme delight that life can give.
Then will the world be gloriously freed
Of civic faults and national jealousies,
And nations guide their acts by that same code
That for themselves their citizens adopt.

O thou great citizen of heaven and earth,
Who died that we might learn how best to live,
If there be hope that we may yet attain
To your divine humility and grace,
Give us some token we can recognize,
That we may feel your guiding spirit near
And struggle on to gain that lasting peace
That passeth the understanding of our world.

SERVANT
SUFFERING
RIGHTEOUSNESS
GOD

As JUSTICE *ends, a voice in the distance is heard chanting:—*


p
cres.
rit.
O Wis - dom, which ca-mest out of the mouth of the Most High,—
p
Come, and shew us the way of un - der-stand - ing.
p
cres.
O Em - man-u - el,— Our King and Law-giv-er, Hope of all Na-tions,
piu f
f
allargando.
p
and their Sa - viour; Come, and save— us, O Lord our God——!

During the singing the lights are gradually dimmed, and as the general light fades, a cross of white light appears at the back, between and over the heads of the PAGES, *who kneel in awe at each side of it, while the others lean forward tense as they listen and watch. As the voice ends, the curtain slowly falls.*

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